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Letter dated 11 July 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that at 0130 hours on the night of 3/4 July 2002 an Israeli patrol halted at the eastern gate of the Metullah settlement opposite Al-Qa'im mosque in Kafr Killa. Soldiers alighted from HMMWV ("Hummer") vehicles, opened the gate and went through the technical fence into Lebanese territory. Six of them stood in front of the gate and another went and stood on a concrete cuboid structure some seven metres from the technical fence. Three minutes later, a patrol from the Indian contingent [of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)] arrived from the direction of the Khiyam lowland and stopped near the Israeli soldiers at the cuboid structure. It then left only to return ten minutes later reinforced by another unit. They stood in front of the Israeli soldiers blocking their way after elements of the resistance had been placed on alert opposite the gate.

After inspecting the site, Lieutenant Colonel René de Coin, chief of the international liaison unit, concluded that the incident had not been a violation but that Lebanon had clearly been provoked by the Israelis when their soldiers had come through the gate without informing UNIFIL of their intention to do so. He stated that they could be held responsible for creating an explosive situation, and he warned against any repetition of what had happened.

The Lebanese Government is of the view that the entry of the Israeli soldiers by way of the gate opposite point 136 west of Metullah on the pretext of mending the fence there constitutes a serious Israeli provocation, especially since UNIFIL was not informed in advance and given the late hour at which they managed to contrive to have the incident take place. This happened in a delicate situation of heightened alert in the area and could have provoked a reaction from citizens and resistance elements. Any future recurrence could have serious consequences.

In the light of the foregoing, Lebanon wishes to lodge with you a protest against these planned and contrived Israeli provocations at this sensitive juncture,

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especially since they coincide with the Israeli political incitement and scare-mongering against Lebanon in the media.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Houssam Asaad Diab**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.